



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

# Statement on Timebanking from the Department of Work and Pensions



Timebanking UK

Timebanking UK are delighted to announce this statement by DWP, London after our negotiations with them on behalf of time banks and their members who are on benefits. This guidance only applies to time banks who are members of TBUK and may not be applicable to other forms of timebanking. The CEO of TBUK will continue to update you as the conversation with DWP and the regions are ongoing.

## **DEPARTMENT OF WORK AND PENSIONS STATEMENT ON TIMEBANKING - November 2015**

Claimants involved in 'timebanking', or 'time-exchange schemes' are regarded as making a positive contribution to the community and are encouraged to do so, although the requirements for being available for work and actively seeking employment still apply. Whilst timebanking is not the same as volunteering, the giving and receiving of time is acknowledged as recognition of positive activity to help others and themselves. Timebanking is the exchange of time where everyone's time is equal regardless of the actual activity involved, therefore it is not classed as bartering. It is reciprocal and informal with local people helping others in the community in a way that they find enjoyable and rewarding. No money changes hands in timebanking and for benefit purposes claimants are not considered to be in remunerative work. However, claimants must still be able to meet the other conditions of entitlement such as being available or actively seeking work. Any participation in time-banking must be declared immediately to DWP. Timebanking UK (TBUK) is the national membership charity that provides advice, guidelines, training and resources to assist with the setting up and development of community time banks across the UK. 30,000 people are currently involved along with 3,700 organisations. To find your nearest time bank or to find out more go to [www.timebanking.org](http://www.timebanking.org)

Whilst volunteering is similar to timebanking, volunteering is described as an unpaid activity where someone gives their time to help an organisation or an individual who they are not related to.

TBUK have an asset based philosophy and have evidence to show that people undertaking timebanking exchanges benefit from their involvement by increased self-esteem and self-confidence which can lead to the person undertaking more formal volunteering or training courses. Time banks across the UK have reported that it is an excellent way to also lead to paid employment. Time banks can provide character references and support for those wanting to improve their skills for returning or joining the working population.

By creating mutual practical and social support networks, timebanking brings people together in communities and values the assets that everyone has. TBUK has a working declaration and safeguarding guidelines to ensure best practice of its member time banks.

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Do remember that to apply for the national Quality Mark, simply download a form from [www.timebanking.org](http://www.timebanking.org).